SEP 1 '77

(Beadle)

Dear Polly

Thank you for your forthright and candid answer, in your letter of August 29, to my query about Ed Tatum.

What you had to say was quite a load on my conscience -- not about my debt to Ed which I have always acknowledged cheerfully -- but that I was viewed as "going out of my way to antagonize." You could not have written that without recalling some very personal affront on my part; and if there is any way to apologize even now I hope I may still try.

What I knew and felt throughout that time, for my own part, was that Ed was a rare person for not rejecting me as a human being at that time -- and that sympathy was an invaluable part of the developmental process he nurtured.

I enjoyed your characterization of Ed's "one-tube" experiments, and will try to inject it into the next draft of the memoir. I am still trying to clear up some details of the discovery of Neurospora, trying to find some documentation to fill out Beadle's patchy and sometimes dogmatic recollections. I have to spend a couple of days at the Rockefeller Archives in N.Y. Jerome Tatum has also been very helpful.

But even getting a reliable fix on just when they actually started experiments on Neurospora has proven to be surprisingly difficult. For example, Bill MacElroy is sure he saw it at Stanford in the summer of 1940. Every other datum points to February 1941. It won't be much of a historical statement if I can't clear that up!

One final note: yes, some parts of my "civilisation" have been very slow to start. But I thought a real fellow about 3 years ago, in the person of my daughter Anne. It's never too late to continue one's education!

Yours,

Joshua.